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ABSTRACT

In the El Paso, Texas, area (a binational community with a growing Mexican American population), bilingual programs operate in almost every public school and the need for certified bilingual teachers is increasing. As of 1981-82, 424 teachers had received bilingual certification based on teaching experience rather than organized university training, and many fewer had been certified through the full 24-hour or minimum 12-hour university program. An elementary teacher education program at the University of Texas at El Paso College of Education is designed to reverse the trend toward minimum standards for bilingual teachers and raise teacher competence levels for improved instructional programs. Bilingual education is now available as a standard teaching field with enhanced in-depth preparation and field practica. In 1982-83, the university certified 23% of all graduating elementary education majors in bilingual education through this program, and certified 34% of former graduates through the minimum 12-hour program. Student reluctance to enroll in the program is ascribed to fear that bilingual education will disappear, and some students resist committing more time and energy to preparation in a field that receives no extra pay. However, in Houston and in El Paso's Yeleta Independent School District, certified bilingual teachers receive up to $1,500 in salary increments for their specialized training, and the approach of rewarding teachers for better preparation is recommended as a means to achieving excellence in bilingual education programs. (MSE)

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DOES BILINGUAL EDUCATION MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO EMPLOYERS?

To employers in Houston, Texas, and the Ysleta Independent School District in El Paso, Texas, bilingual education means a bargain and a cash bonus for teachers. In those districts salary increments of up to $1,500 are given for bilingual education certification.

Not so in California. According to the Stanford Educator, 1983 Winter issue reporting the results of a statewide study of public school employment and assignment practices, bilingual education has not resulted in a jobs program for Hispanics. According to Craig Richards of the Institute for Research on Educational Finance and Governance, "While Hispanic pupils now represent well over one-third of all California students, only one out of every twenty teachers is Hispanic. By 1985, Hispanic students are projected to represent nearly half of the California student population and indications are that the Los Angeles Unified District may become entirely Hispanic in the next decade."[1]. Even so, according to Richards, the one to twenty ratio of Hispanic to non-Hispanic teachers is not likely to improve given current hiring practices. For example, of the new teachers hired in 1980 in California's public schools, 84% were Anglo and 10% were Hispanic. According to the California Commission for Teacher Preparation and Licensing, the supply of bilingually certified teachers is meeting only about 50% of the demand and the gap between supply and demand is not likely to close over the next few years. . .[2]. That is the case in California. Generally to all employers bilingual education means a bilingual person who can teach children for whom English is a second language with or without an emergency permit, a bilingual certificate or a bilingual endorsement.

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How do these employer perceptions impact on the delivery of bilingual education?

In this paper I will present an analysis of teacher training statistics at the University of Texas at El Paso; an overview of the professional preparation of bilingual education majors versus non-bilingual education majors, and their potential and eventual employment in the public school market place, a market place that is currently meeting an estimated 50% of the demand (and the realistic prediction that given current trends) the gap between supply and demand is not likely to close over the next few years. In looking for alternatives one must ask if this is the best we can do. Are there recommendations that can and should be made?

The University of Texas at El Paso (UT El Paso) is situated in a binational community of approximately 1.5 million people in far West Texas on the U.S.-Mexico border. The population of the City of El Paso is about one half million and approximately 60% Mexican American, with this percentage constantly increasing due to the influx of immigrants from Mexico. Texas Education Agency statistics indicate that one out of five children entering school in Texas is Spanish-surnamed; the El Paso ratio is three out of five, accurately reflecting the ethnic distribution of the local population. Of 15,000 students enrolled at UT El Paso, almost half are Mexican Americans.

It is not surprising, then, that in the El Paso area, Bilingual Education programs operate in almost every school in every school district. Table 1 shows that every school has had an increase in enrollment of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students qualifying for some type of bilingual instruction. Furthermore, because of migration and immigration from Mexico, this enrollment growth is projected to continue steadily in coming years.

TABLE 1
*Actual and Projected Enrollment K-12
of Limited English Proficiency Students
Period: 1982 - 1986

District	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	Total LEP Enrollment by District
EL PASO ISD, 4th largest school district in Texas	11,000	11,000	11,000	11,000	44,000
YSLETA ISD, 7th largest & fastest growing district in Texas	7,000	8,000	9,000	10,000	34,000
FABENS ISD	525	549	600	600	2,274
SOCORRO ISD, rural area in process of becoming a suburb	3,076	3,354	3,793	4,176	14,399
The remaining three school districts in El Paso area, including Southern New Mexico	2,905	3,210	3,700	4,100	13,915
			TOTAL AREA ENROLLMENT OF LEP CHILDREN		108,688

*Source: Statistics provided by the local education agencies, March 1981.

With this increase in LEP students, the need for teachers trained in bilingual education has grown correspondingly. Local education agencies anticipated that collectively they would have 310 new positions available in bilingual education for 1984-85 which includes a 15% turnover (Table 2). Since 1979, the certification of teachers in bilingual education in Texas is the sole function of institutions of higher education; the task of training bilingual education teachers in the greater El Paso area, by Texas law, falls exclusively to The University of Texas at El Paso.

A Texas State Profile of Bilingual Education/ESL Professional Staff Report, Table 3, reveals that in 1981-82 Region XIX, the El Paso area served by this University, had the third largest number (606) of certified bilingual education teachers in the State. Yet, it still ranked second in terms of need having 496 bilingual education teachers on Emergency Permit. The El Paso area ranks second in the State in need of certified personnel.

A closer look at statistics for that period--Table 3--reveals that of those 606 certified teachers in 1981-82 only 129 undergraduates had received certification in bilingual education as a teaching field, i.e., a full twenty-four hour coordinated interdisciplinary program. Between 1979-82 (the year the universities began to give the endorsement) only 53 elementary school teachers received certification through the minimum twelve-hour endorsement program. This means that as of 1981-82, the date of the TEA Study, 424 had received bilingual education certification through the blanket grandfather clause, i.e. through hands-on experience on the job rather than organized university training. This situation developed historically at the time when schools were ordered by the Courts to provide special instruction to LEP students. It was logistically impossible to wait to certify teachers through conventional means. What transpired in El Paso is typical of what was happening on a national level:

TABLE 2
+Estimated and Projected Additional Teaching Positions
Needed with Bilingual Education Training by School Districts
1982 - 1985

Academic Year	El Paso Independent School District	Ysleta Independent School District	Remaining 5 school districts in El Paso Area	TOTAL AREA NEEDS
1982-83	176	21	36	233
1983-84	203	25	40	268
1984-85	233	30	47	310

+Based on figures provided by local education agencies.

These figures include a large annual turnover (15%) of bilingual personnel in the 4th largest school district in Texas.

TABLE 3
*State Profile: Professional Staff
1981 - 1982

Education Service Center Area	Certified Bilingual Teachers	Bilingual Teachers on Permit	ESL Teachers
I	2,358	389	468
II	416	39	125
III	10	0	83
IV	428	49	139
V	1	8	18
VI	13	10	45
VII	6	25	70
VIII	1	0	23
IX	8	2	13
X	309	63	1,320
XI	98	27	384
XII	17	1	43
XIII	267	34	394
XIV	46	4	127
XV	124	17	50
XVI	68	9	56
XVII	303	36	86
XVIII	95	16	83
**XIX	606	496	232
XX	1,533	664	383
STATE TOTALS	6,707	1,909	4,132

**The University of Texas at El Paso is located in Region XIX.

Source: Application for Operational Expense Allocation, 1981-82 (BE-006R82). Submitted by TEA.

blanket grandfathering and minimal certification standards were allowed in order to enable schools to comply with the law. What these figures confirm is what we in bilingual education already know: there are three types of teachers implementing our programs, all with different kinds of certification, ranging from "grandfathered" teachers to fully certified in bilingual education. Additionally there are those who by virtue of being bilingual are hired without any of the above certification categories.

Whereas the above analysis is not intended to deprecate or minimize the value of the work that the teachers of LEP children currently are doing in local schools, it is helpful in focusing on a larger issue, an area of intense current interest and of vital importance to teacher educators everywhere: the education of the profession, a reversal of the minimum-standards-of-performance syndrome in favor of higher levels of competence in all teaching areas known to increase positive effects on student learning. Our priority now must be to review teacher training models and re-design them to reflect this reversal.

We may begin by reviewing the elementary teacher preparation program at The University of Texas at El Paso College of Education. All elementary education majors at UT El Paso like other teacher training institutions receive basically the same professional preparation according to state and National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education standards. A 24 hour specialization or teaching field is required as well as a number of combination subjects intended to complement the preparation of the teacher trainees. Among the teaching fields we find reading, math, science, bilingual education, etc. Upon graduation with the required number of hours, all are certified as elementary teachers eligible for employment in elementary schools. The bilingual education teacher trainee receives as part of his/her regular preparation the training and practica

listed below on the left hand side; non-bilingual education majors receive the training and practica listed on the right hand side.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION DEGREE PLAN

Major - Elementary Education

TEACHING FIELD: Bilingual Education

Indepth preparation: in Language Assessment Instruments, Linguistics, History and Literature of Mexican Americans in Southwest Spanish for Instruction, Reading in English and Spanish

Combination Subjects

Field Practica

- practicums begin sophomore semester
- internships in Juarez
- observation in variety of settings, LEP + non-LEP, urban/rural
- structured field experience in schools
- ethnographic research studies
- student teaching in regular and bilingual education setting
- graduates with special preparation along with all skills of any elementary teacher

TEACHING FIELD: Other School Subjects

Indepth preparation

Combination Subjects

Field Practica

- practicums begin sophomore semester
- structured field experience in schools
- student teaching in regular classroom
- graduates with all the skills needed by elementary school teacher

In 1982-83 UT El Paso fully certified 23% of all graduating elementary majors in bilingual education; also 34% of graduates from previous years completed the minimum twelve semester hour endorsement. The two types are hired at equal salaries and in the eyes of the employer the deficiency in the non-bilingual preparation will be overcome and erased after an endorsement program that covers the minimum essentials. Please note that the bilingual education majors who are there by choice have had three to four years to develop into teachers of bilingual children, with a deep sense of commitment

to the improvement of the education of the LEP child. They grow with an ever positive, ever sensitive and facilitative attitude into the type of teachers we need in bilingual education programs.

Although most of our students are Spanish speaking many are reluctant to choose bilingual education as a teaching field for reasons that include fear that bilingual education will be disappearing from the educational scene, a fear that is reinforced and perpetuated by constant negative attacks in the American media. On graduation they are unable to find jobs because they are not prepared to teach LEP children. To secure a job, these graduates reluctantly agree to enroll in the minimum endorsement program which means four university courses plus passing the oral Spanish Language Proficiency Interview and the written Spanish CLEP, College Level Entrance Test.

Instructors in endorsement courses have observed that most of these teachers who enroll in the course are equally reluctant to commit more than minimum effort to course requirements; they are resentful of having to take additional college preparation to keep a teaching job that pays no more. Generally these teachers are characterized by their instructors as having a bad attitude.

We thus have a picture of the typical pool of bilingual education teachers, all indiscriminately labeled as certified to teach in bilingual education programs.

How do the three types impact on the implementation of bilingual education? Employers at the local school district level are primarily concerned with meeting legal requirements and in keeping classrooms and school open. It is doubtful that they will be equally concerned about the quality of instruction being delivered to the LEP child. In the classrooms the different types of teachers can have varied effects.

Generally a teacher with a positive attitude about bilingual education will impart the same positive feelings to others; to children, to their parents, to other teachers and educational personnel. The same holds true of those with negative attitudes. Fortunately there is very strong popular support for bilingual education and the credit must rightfully go to the dedicated teachers of bilingual education. In the academic achievement of LEP children as measured and reported in national studies, the impact of the three types of teachers as a group is well documented. Bilingual Education works when and where it is implemented by design and intention and can just as easily be sabotaged when hiring practices are guided primarily by legalistic principle rather than humanistic, educational goals.

Bilingual education is the educational promise we the educators have pledged to deliver. If the delivery is not being realized then we have the moral duty and obligation to look beyond the simplistic conclusion that bilingual education does <u>not</u> work. <u>It works</u> when it is implemented the way it is intended to be implemented. The exigencies of the past have created an indiscriminate pool of so-called bilingual education certified teachers each implementing its own variety of bilingual education. A rational view to the future dictates that research conducted to identify direct cause and effect relationships in teaching/learning of LEP students served by the three types of teachers discussed above; that bilingual education teacher preparation be made more uniform and more comprehensive; that employers reward the dual language preparation of a bilingual education teacher by offering monetary incentives to teachers fully certified in bilingual education. Then, and only then will we have the key to excellence in bilingual education.

Another alternative towards this goal is to attract and hold more gifted and talented students into the profession. We must work cooperatively

with state and local agencies to bring about increased opportunities for teachers to earn promotions and advancements in teaching without seeking administrative assignments. Together we can work to encourage review of the recognition and reward systems now in place in our schools so that incentives for extraordinary teaching will open through teacher personnel policies. Together we can do it and we can make bilingual education make a difference not only to employers but where it counts: the educational promise we made to the LEP child.

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Notes

1. "Bilingual Education Funding Not a Jobs Program for Hispanics," The Stanford Educator, Winter 1983.

2. Ibid.

3. "Texas State Profile of Bilingual Education/ESL Professional Staff Report," Application for Operational Expense Allocation, Texas Education Agency, 1981-82 (BE-006R82).